

Proposed Warrenton Service District Plan Amendment CPAM10-MA-001	Planning Commission Recommended Refinements February 25, 2010
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## **Chapter 6 – Service Districts**

### **Text Amendment to the Warrenton Service District Plan**

## 8. Warrenton Service District Transportation

Figure 10–WA–1 identifies existing and proposed arterial and collector roads in the Warrenton Service District. Prominent among these arterial roads are Routes 15/29 and Routes 17 and 211. Business Route 15/29, Lee Highway, Broadview Avenue and Shirley Avenue, are also shown because they function as important elements in the road network although they lie within the boundaries of the Town of Warrenton.

### a. Lee Highway and Broadview Avenue

The Warrenton Plan proposes that the design and performance of U.S. Route 15/29 Business, Lee Highway and Broadview Avenue, be significantly upgraded to provide more efficient access management for long-term capacity and safety improvements to accommodate anticipated community and traffic growth requirements. Such local street upgrades should provide for safe traffic flows to community or business locations as well as essential through traffic movement to Route 15/29, and other destinations by means of:

- Streaming arterial, collector and local access traffic;
- Improved road and intersectional engineering;
- Median separations and crossovers; and
- Greater inter-parcel-access between commercial developments alongside the arterial road.

To this end, the County will assist the Town of Warrenton in the effort to find funding through the VDOT 6-Year Improvement Program for the restructuring of this important roadway link of U.S. 15/29 (Business).

The “Warrenton Broadview Avenue Access Management Study” (HNTB prepared for: VDOT and the Town of Warrenton in May of 2008) identified options were identified that would improve the safety and operational capacity of this major street and access to local businesses in the long-term. additionally, the study indicated that a connection between Route 211 and Route 17 in the future could reduce peak hour traffic along Broadview Avenue by an estimated thirty percent.

### b. Route 211 – Route 17 Connector Corridor Reservation

Some of the building blocks for a Route 211 - 17 corridor reservation have already been established through the following actions:

- 1) Board of Supervisors approval of the St. Leonard’s Farm rezoning and the proffered Concept Development Plan’s (CDP) in 2003. Here the rezoning established a 250-foot buffer along the property line adjacent to the Town Park and limited access on Route 211 to a single location. The CDP also designated a road linking Route 211 and Lower Waterloo Road, with access provided to both the park and future residential neighborhood;

- 2) Town of Warrenton completion of both the Route 211 crossover and entrance to the Town Park's athletic fields consistent with the referenced CDP; and
- 3) The court ordered design, construction and dedication of Timber Fence Parkway, which intersects with Bear Wallow Road (Route 690) north of Fauquier High School, to the Town of Warrenton. Two lanes of the Parkway have been constructed within a 110-foot right-of-way, both of which are now owned and maintained by the Town of Warrenton. Due to its southern blockaded termination at the edge of Fauquier High School property, Timber Fence Parkway now serves only the Gold Cup and Silver Cup residential neighborhoods with access limited to Bear Wallow Road.

Any future road in this proposed corridor should be designed within a 110-foot right-of-way to match Timber Fence Parkway. Pedestrian accommodation through sidewalks and multi-purpose paths and traffic calming within its overall design are essential elements due to the established neighborhoods, parks and school facilities that need to be carefully linked. Such a road ideally would provide neighborhood residents with alternative travel connections that are not available west of Broadview Avenue, better access to community parks, and improved access for emergency vehicles throughout the residential and business community.

Any prospective road constructed within the proposed reservation is planned to remain as a 2-lane facility well into the future. If increases in traffic volume require reevaluation and warrant lane additions at selected locations or throughout the corridor, then the 110-foot right-of-way reservation provides the flexibility for such improvements. Any future road design shall have strategically located and clearly marked pedestrian crossings, maximum integration of traffic calming design features, including roundabouts at key intersections (e.g., Timber Fence Parkway/Black Sweep Road and Route 690/Timber Fence Parkway), and have limited access to any extension from Route 690 to Route 17. Here limited access means that no access from Rady Park or the adjoining rural agriculturally zoned area will be allowed connections to this road between Bear Wallow Road and Route 17.

Road design facility from the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) to the final design stages will require community involvement, including the Board of Supervisors, Town of Warrenton, the affected neighborhoods and the broader town-county community. The objective is to insure environmental, historical, neighborhood, and public impacts and costs are carefully assessed and balanced within the final design of this key facility.

The northern portion of the corridor is within the Warrenton Reservoir's watershed. In another section of the Warrenton Service District Plan, this watershed has been identified for protection through the recommended development and implementation of a Public Reservoir Management and Protection Overlay District.

Therefore, integral in the study and design of any such future community public street will also be its effect on the watershed. The quality and quantity of surface water from this watershed represents the primary drinking water source for the Town of Warrenton. The Town provides its residents and business community, as well as some adjoining

neighborhoods in the County, with public water service from a series of reservoirs located on Cedar Run. This watershed once was characterized as rural in character, but that is now not the case and any type of development presents potential impacts to the quantity and quality of this critical water resource area. As reflected in another section of this plan, the Town of Warrenton's potable water supply needs long term management and remedial attention. Therefore, any road design must: (a) protect critical wetland resources and habitat areas; and (b) incorporate design features within the r-o-w and externally that promote continued stormwater pollutant cleansing from this roadway. The clear added objective here is that road design, construction, and operation will result in no impacts and may even improve the quality of water flowing from its area to the Town's reservoir.

Road construction from Bear Wallow Road onward to Route 17 should not be undertaken unless:

- 1) It is established that such a road is the permanent hard edge of Warrenton and the Warrenton Service District;
- 2) The County and Town have secured conservation easements or development rights on the Rural Agriculture (RA) zoned land to the west of the reservation so as to assure its continued contribution to the water supply of Warrenton;
- 3) No construction shall occur between Route 211 and Route 17, until the Town of Warrenton has implemented the recommended improvements and access management along Broadview Avenue as represented in the Warrenton Broadview Access Management Study (HNTB Prepared for: Town of Warrenton and VDOT; Dated: May 30, 2008); and
- 4) Actual traffic volumes clearly indicate the need, and no other reasonable options are available.

To facilitate comprehensive evaluation of options, it is recommended that the County initiate transportation network planning at a regional level for Route 211, which considers existing public road links west of Warrenton that access the Town or extend to connections with I-66, Route 29 and Route 17. Such action could provide more effective traffic distribution and road travel choices for the public, as well as the identification of essential road and intersectional safety improvements that need to be programmatically considered, funded and then constructed in the future throughout that network.

**c. East of Academy Hill Bridge**

The Town of Warrenton chose to not incorporate the area east of Academy Hill Bridge within the Town Boundary, and in recent years landowners in the area have applied for and received subdivision approval of some 450 – 500 lots, generating some 4,500 – 5,000 vehicle trips per day. At present, the only roads out to jobs and shopping are already overcrowded Academy Hill Road and Bypass Route 29. There are thus immediate and

longer term needs for improving existing public road networks in this eastern area of the service district. Figure 10-WA-2.1 represents one possible option in which a new bridge is constructed to link Route 674 and Route 678 and these roads are refurbished as a major collector road. Comfort Inn Drive is brought into the Commonwealth road network and extended to intersect with the newly linked roads just east of the bridge. Figure 10-WA-2.2 represents an alternative option in which the Route 674/678 Bridge is not constructed and traffic is directed unto Route 674 rebuilt as a major collector road. These two options achieve progressively less traffic relief for Warrenton, at the price of increasing engineering and construction costs.

**d. Route 15/29 North East of Warrenton**

A legacy of spot commercial zoning on the south side of Route 15/29 to the northeast of Warrenton has permitted the development of a very successful commercial strip. However, poor to dangerous traffic access creates considerable roadside friction for patrons and through travelers. In the long term, the Plan proposes a service road and recreational access path constructed parallel with and to the south of existing Route 15/29 between Comfort Inn Drive and Cedar Run Drives. See 10 – WA – 2.1 / 2 / 3.

In the short term:

- Traffic movement between individual parking lots must be enhanced by inter-parcel access along clearly defined routes for patron comfort and safety;
- Traffic into the southern end of the commercial strip should be funneled through the light at Route 15/29 and Comfort Inn Drive in such a way that the first 100 feet of access from Route 15/29 is clear, predictable and safe; and
- The County will work with affected landowners to shield them from the liability associated with the inter-parcel access proposed.

Example 1 illustrates these principles. Given current high land values, and high volumes of traffic flow on Route 15/29 the ultimate solution for safe and effective traffic movement through this commercial strip will require enlightened agreement among all the property owners and solid engineering advice. Example 1, though not the ultimate solution, shows how enhanced safety should be sought.

In the longer term, construction of the service road would permit volume traffic flows to Cedar Run Drive with several short connector roads connecting Comfort Inn Drive with the Route 15/29 Service Road. This service road will require considerable road remodeling at the intersection of Cedar Run Drive. The Plan anticipates that the beneficiaries of enhanced commercial use along the Service Road will contribute funds for construction.

**e. Road Improvements in South Warrenton**

Figures 10-WA-2.1 through 2.3 also include reciprocal improvements to the Town's road network to the west. These improvements, such as the extension of Walker Drive southwards, are entirely within the jurisdictional purview of Warrenton which the County respects, but do represent integral traffic management components of the overall solution. The Plan recommends that Fauquier County, the Town of Warrenton and VDOT work together in developing practical and cost effective improvements to the local road system in this location for inclusion in the VDOT 6-Year Program.

